

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 15328 032111Z

15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 TRSE-00 /067 W

----- 117189

R 031849Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5328

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BELFAST BY POUCH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL BY POUCH

AMCONSUL BELFAST BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 15328

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UK

SUBJECT: PRE-CONVENTION MOOD OF CONSERVATIVES: BOTHERED,
SOMEWHAT BEWILDERED, BUT NOT YET BEWITCHED

REF: LONDON 15191

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 15328 032111Z

SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE PARTY, IN FINAL DAYS BEFORE ASSEMBLING AT BLACKPOOL FOR ANNUAL CONVENTION, IS UNENTHUSIASTIC, SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE AND BY NO MEANS LOOKS FORWARD TO ANNUAL CONVENTION. END SUMMARY

1. CONSERVATIVE PARTY IS CURRENTLY RATHER UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ITS UPCOMING ANNUAL CONVENTION. MPS, PARTY OFFICIALS AND ORDINARY PARTY MEMBERS ARE "RESIGNED" TO THE FACT OF HAVING TO GO TO BLACKPOOL NEXT WEEK. THEY ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECT, AND IT'S NOT SIMPLY THEIR DISTASTE FOR BLACKPOOL HOTEL LIFE OR THE QUESTIONABLE OFFERINGS OF THE TRADITIONAL CUISINE.

2. LACK OF ENTHUSIASM IS ROOTED IN BASIC ACCEPTANCE OF PRESENT POLITICAL BALANCE, WHICH IS NOT IN THEIR FAVOR. CONSERVATIVE STRENGTH IN COMMONS IS NOT SUFFICIENT, EVEN IF FULLY MOBILIZED AND UNITED, TO THREATEN SERIOUSLY CONTROL OF THE LABOR GOVERNMENT. THUS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND ADRENALIN THAT COURSES THROUGH THE PARTY AT SUCH TIMES ARE SOME DISTANCE IN THE FUTURE. CONSERVATIVES ANTICIPATE THAT LABOR WILL NOT HAVE TO CALL NATIONAL ELECTIONS UNTIL 1977 AT THE EARLIEST.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, MPS EXPECT RUMP SESSION OF LAST PARLIAMENT AND THE NEW PARLIAMENT, BEGINNING IN NOVEMBER TO BE FILLED WITH CONTINUING HEAVY PROGRAMMING OF LEGISLATION, REQUIRING COMMITMENT OF TIME TO SESSIONS IN THE HOUSE AS WELL AS TO INTENSIVE COMMITTEE WORK. CONSERVATIVES, PARTICULARLY YOUNGER MPS, HAVE GAINED A GREAT DEAL OF POLITICAL EXPERTISE DURING THIS PAST PRESSUREIZED PARLIAMENT, BUT HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE EFFECTIVELY TO DOMINATE OR MAKE SERIOUS IN-ROADS AGAINST LABOR PROGRAM. THUS, IN RECENT POLITICAL BROADCAST OF PARTY, CONSERVATIVES TACITLY ACCEPTED FACT THEY COULD NOT DEFEAT GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY LAND NATIONALIZATION AND ANNOUNCED CONSERVATIVES (I.E., THE NEXT GOVERNMENT) WOULD REPEAL LABOR'S LEGISLATION. THIS TONE, THAT IS RELUCTANT ACCEPTANCE OF INABILITY OF CONSERVATIVES TO DEFEAT LABOR NOR AND IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE HAS ALSO CREPT INTO SOME OF MRS THATCHER'S SPEECHES.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LONDON 15328 032111Z

4. CONSERVATIVES SEE THEIR BLACKPOOL MEETING AS CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE GREATER DEGREE OF UNITY WITHIN PARTY THAN LABOR CONVENTION HAS DISPLAYED. NO ONE SERIOUSLY EXPECTS THAT MARGARET THATCHER'S LEADERSHIP WILL BE EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO PARTY'S CURRENT POLICIES ON ECONOMICS AND INFLATION. SUCH FIREWORKS AS MAY OCCUR IN DEBATES SCHEDULED ON BOTH THESE TOPICS, ARE LIKELY TO BE SHORT-LIVED. TORIES OF

COURSE, HAVE BEEN PLEASED BY MEDIA DISPLAY OF LABOR PARTY'S DISARRAY THIS WEEK IN BLACKPOOL AND WILL SEE TO AVOID PUBLIC SHOW OF PARTY FRICTION AND DISUNITY.

5. CONSERVATIVES DO EXPECT CONVENTION TO ENDORSE MRS THATCHER RESOUNDINGLY AS LEADER OF THE PARTY, AND NET EFFECT OF BLACKPOOL WILL BE PAEAN OF ADULATION AND PRAISE FOR HER. COMING ON TOP OF HER SUCCESSFUL VISIT IN THE U.S., THIS WILL STRENGTHEN HER CONFIDENCE, PERHAPS PERMITTING HER TO CARRY FURTHER CHANGES OUT IN COMPOSITION OF SHADOW CABINET, PARTY DIRECTION AND POLICY FORMULATION. WITH APPLAUSE RINGING IN HER EARS, MRS THATCHER MAY WELL BE ENCOURAGED TO SOMEWHAT MORE AGGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ACCROSS-THE-BOARD.

6. IN THIS CONNECTION, HEATH EXPECTS TO MAKE VERY SHORT APPEARANCE AT BLACKPOOL BUT WILL NOT BE PRESENT FOR FINAL STAGES OF CONVENTION WHICH WILL BE DOMINATED BY MRS THATCHER. ONE OF HIS YOUNG POLITICAL AIDES TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HEATH HAS NO ILLUSIONS AS TO POSSIBILITY OF EVER BECOMING LEADER OF PARTY AGAIN AND THUS FACES DILEMMA OF DECIDING WHETHER HE WILL A) LEAVE POLITICS, B) REMAIN IN POLITICS BUT LEAVE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OR C) REMAIN IN POLITICS AND HOUSE FOR A TIME, MAKING OCCASIONAL SPEECHES AND SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON PARTY FROM TIME-TO-TIME. NOW THAT REFERENDUM SUCCESSFULLY WON, HEATH PROBABLY WILL HAVE TO FIND SOMETHING TO DO TO FOCUS HIS TALENTS, ACCORDING TO AIDE, BUT EXACTLY WHAT THAT WILL BE IS NOT CLEAR.

7. PREVAILING MOOD OF CONSERVATIVES JUST BEFORE ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS MIXED: RESIGNATION THAT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LONDON 15328 032111Z

TIME HAS ROLLED AROUND AGAIN; RESOLUTION TO AVOID PUBLICITY ON INTER-PARTY DISAGREEMENT AND TO PRESENT SHOW OF UNITY: ANTICIPATION THAT CONFERENCE WILL END UP AS VEHICLE FOR THATCHER LEADERSHIP: AND DREAD THAT CONFERENCE WILL BE DREARY, UNDRAMATIC AND DULL FROM MEDIA'S POINT OF VIEW. WITH THIS KIND OF ATMOSPHERE, MRS THATCHER'S JOB OF ELECTRIFYING THE CONFERENCE AND CONVINCING PARTY MEMBERS CONSERVATIVES CAN WIN UNDER HER LEADERSHIP WILL BE ALL THE HARDER.

SPIERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY MEETINGS, MEETING PROCEEDINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON15328
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750344-1015
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751084/aaaacwuj.tel
Line Count: 164
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LONDON 15191
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <25 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRE-CONVENTION MOOD OF CONSERVATIVES: BOTHERED, SOMEWHAT BEWILDERED, BUT NOT YET BEWITCHED
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, OCON, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006